

According to the American Federation of Musicians, minimum salaries in major orchestras ranged from \$24,720 to \$100,196 per year during the 2000-01 performing season. Each orchestra works out a separate contract with its local union. Top orchestras have a season ranging from 24 to 52 weeks, with 18 orchestras reporting 52-week contracts. In regional orchestras, minimum salaries are often less because fewer performances are scheduled. Community orchestras often have more limited levels of funding and offer salaries that are much lower for seasons of shorter duration. Regional orchestra musicians often are paid per service without guarantees.

Although musicians employed by some symphony orchestras work under master wage agreements, which guarantee a season's work up to 52 weeks, many other musicians face relatively long periods of unemployment between jobs. Even when employed, many musicians and singers work part time in unrelated occupations. Thus, their earnings usually are lower than earnings in many other occupations. Moreover, because they may not work steadily for one employer, some performers cannot qualify for unemployment compensation, and few have typical benefits such as sick leave or paid vacations. For these reasons, many musicians give private

lessons or take jobs unrelated to music to supplement their earnings as performers.

Many musicians belong to a local of the American Federation of Musicians. Professional singers usually belong to a branch of the American Guild of Musical Artists.

### Related Occupations

Musical instrument repairers and tuners (part of precision instrument and equipment repairers) require technical knowledge of musical instruments. Others whose work involves music include actors, producers, and directors; announcers; broadcast and sound engineering technicians and radio operators; and dancers and choreographers.

### Sources of Additional Information

For general information about music and music teacher education and a list of accredited college-level programs, contact:

► National Association of Schools of Music, 11250 Roger Bacon Dr., Suite 21, Reston, VA 22091. Internet:

<http://www.arts-accredit.org/nasm/nasm.htm>

## Media and Communication-Related Occupations

### Announcers

(O\*NET 27-3011.00, 27-3012.00)

#### Significant Points

- Competition for announcer jobs will continue to be keen.
- Jobs at small stations usually have low pay, but offer the best opportunities for beginners.
- Related work experience at a campus radio station or as an intern at a commercial station can be helpful in breaking into the occupation.

#### Nature of the Work

Announcers in radio and television perform a variety of tasks on and off the air. They announce station program information such as program schedules and station breaks for commercials or public service information, and they introduce and close programs. Announcers read prepared scripts or ad-lib commentary on the air when presenting news, sports, weather, time, and commercials. If a written script is required, they may do the research and writing. Announcers also interview guests and moderate panels or discussions. Some provide commentary for the audience during sporting events, parades, and other events. Announcers are often well-known to radio and television audiences and may make promotional appearances and remote broadcasts for their stations.

Radio announcers often are called *disc jockeys*. Some disc jockeys specialize in one kind of music. They announce music selections and may decide what music to play. While on the air, they comment on the music, weather, and traffic. They may take requests from listeners, interview guests, and manage listener contests.

*Newscasters* or *anchors* work at large stations and specialize in news, sports, or weather. (See the related statement on news analysts, reporters, and correspondents elsewhere in the *Handbook*.) *Show hosts* may specialize in a certain area of interest such as



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politics, personal finance, sports, or health. They contribute to the preparation of the program content; interview guests; and discuss issues with viewers, listeners, or an in-studio audience.

Announcers at smaller stations may cover all of these areas and tend to have more off-air duties as well. They may operate the control board, monitor the transmitter, sell commercial time to advertisers, keep a log of the station's daily programming, and do production work. Consolidation and automation make it possible for announcers to do some work previously performed by broadcast technicians. (See the statement on broadcast and sound engineering technicians and radio operators elsewhere in the *Handbook*.) Announcers use the control board to broadcast programming, commercials, and public service announcements according to schedule. Public radio and television announcers are involved with station fundraising efforts.

Announcers frequently participate in community activities. Sports announcers, for example, may serve as masters of ceremonies at sports club banquets or may greet customers at openings of sporting goods stores.

Although most announcers are employed in radio and television broadcasting, some are employed in the cable television or motion picture production industries. Other announcers may use a public address system to provide information to the audience at sporting and other events. Some disc jockeys announce and play music at clubs, dances, restaurants, and weddings.

### Working Conditions

Announcers usually work in well-lighted, air-conditioned, sound-proof studios. The broadcast day is long for radio and TV stations—some are on the air 24 hours a day—so announcers can expect to work unusual hours. Many present early morning shows, when most people are getting ready for work or commuting, while others do late night programs.

Announcers often work within tight schedule constraints, which can be physically and mentally stressful. For many announcers, the intangible rewards—creative work, many personal contacts, and the satisfaction of becoming widely known—far outweigh the disadvantages of irregular and often unpredictable hours, work pressures, and disrupted personal lives.

### Employment

Announcers held about 71,000 jobs in 2000. Nearly all were staff announcers employed in radio and television broadcasting, but some were freelance announcers who sold their services for individual assignments to networks and stations, or to advertising agencies and other independent producers. Many announcing jobs are part time.

### Training, Other Qualifications, and Advancement

Entry into this occupation is highly competitive. Formal training in broadcasting from a college or technical school (private broadcasting school) is valuable. Station officials pay particular attention to taped auditions that show an applicant's delivery and—in television—appearance and style on commercials, news, and interviews. Those hired by television stations usually start out as production assistants, researchers, or reporters and are given a chance to move into announcing if they show an aptitude for "on-air" work. Newcomers to TV broadcasting also may begin as news camera operators. (See the statement on television, video, and motion picture camera operators and editors elsewhere in the *Handbook*.) A beginner's chance of landing an on-air job is remote, except possibly for a small radio station. In radio, newcomers usually start out taping interviews and operating equipment.

Announcers usually begin at a station in a small community and, if qualified, may move to a better paying job in a large city.

They also may advance by hosting a regular program as a disc jockey, sportscaster, or other specialist. Competition is particularly intense for employment by networks, and employers look for college graduates with at least several years of successful announcing experience.

Announcers must have a pleasant and well-controlled voice, good timing, excellent pronunciation, and must know correct grammar usage. Television announcers need a neat, pleasing appearance as well. Knowledge of theater, sports, music, business, politics, and other subjects likely to be covered in broadcasts improves chances for success. Announcers also must be computer-literate because programming is created and edited by computer. In addition, they should be able to ad-lib all or part of a show and to work under tight deadlines. The most successful announcers attract a large audience by combining a pleasing personality and voice with an appealing style.

High school and college courses in English, public speaking, drama, foreign languages, and computer science are valuable, and hobbies such as sports and music are additional assets. Students may gain valuable experience at campus radio or TV facilities and at commercial stations while serving as interns. Paid or unpaid internships provide students with hands-on training and the chance to establish contacts in the industry. Unpaid interns often receive college credit and are allowed to observe and assist station employees. Although the Fair Labor Standards Act limits the work unpaid interns may perform in a station, unpaid internships are the rule; sometimes they lead to paid internships. Paid internships are valuable because interns do work ordinarily done by regular employees and may even go on the air.

Persons considering enrolling in a broadcasting school should contact personnel managers of radio and television stations as well as broadcasting trade organizations to determine the school's reputation for producing suitably trained candidates.

### Job Outlook

Competition for jobs as announcers will be keen because the broadcasting field attracts many more job seekers than there are jobs. Small radio stations are more inclined to hire beginners, but the pay is low. Interns usually receive preference for available positions. Because competition for ratings is so intense in major metropolitan areas, large stations will continue to seek announcers who have proven that they can attract and retain a large audience.

Announcers who are knowledgeable in business, consumer, and health news may have an advantage over others. While specialization is more common at large stations and the networks, many small stations also encourage it.

Employment of announcers is expected to decline through 2010 due to the lack of growth of new radio and television stations. Openings in this relatively small field also will arise from the need to replace those who transfer to other kinds of work or leave the labor force. Some announcers leave the field because they cannot advance to better paying jobs. Changes in station ownership, format, and ratings frequently cause periods of unemployment for many announcers.

Increasing consolidation of radio and television stations, new technology, and the growth of alternative media sources will contribute to the expected decline in employment of announcers. Consolidation in broadcasting may lead to increased use of syndicated programming and programs originating outside a station's viewing or listening area. Digital technology will increase the productivity of announcers, reducing the time spent on off-air technical and production work. In addition, all traditional media, including radio and television, may suffer losses in audience as the American public increases its use of personal computers.

### Earnings

Salaries in broadcasting vary widely but in general are relatively low, except for announcers who work for large stations in major markets or for networks. Earnings are higher in television than in radio and higher in commercial than in public broadcasting.

Median hourly earnings of announcers in 2000 were \$9.52. The middle 50 percent earned between \$6.84 and \$14.28. The lowest 10 percent earned less than \$5.94, and the highest 10 percent earned more than \$24.35. Median hourly earnings of announcers in 2000 were \$9.54 in the radio and television broadcasting industry.

### Related Occupations

The success of announcers depends upon how well they communicate. Others who must be skilled at oral communication include news analysts, reporters, and correspondents; interpreters and translators; sales and related occupations; public relations specialists; and teachers. Many announcers also must entertain their audience, so their work is similar to other entertainment-related occupations such as actors, directors, and producers; dancers and choreographers; and musicians, singers, and related workers.

### Sources of Additional Information

General information on the broadcasting industry is available from:

► National Association of Broadcasters, 1771 N St. NW., Washington, DC 20036. Internet: <http://www.nab.org>

## Broadcast and Sound Engineering Technicians and Radio Operators

(O\*NET 27-4011.00, 27-4012.00, 27-4013.00, 27-4014.00)

### Significant Points

- Job applicants will face strong competition for the better paying jobs at radio and television stations serving large cities.
- Television stations employ, on average, many more technicians than do radio stations.
- Evening, weekend, and holiday work is common.

### Nature of the Work

Broadcast and sound engineering technicians install, test, repair, set up, and operate the electronic equipment used to record and transmit radio and television programs, cable programs, and motion pictures. They work with television cameras, microphones, tape recorders, lighting, sound effects, transmitters, antennas, and other equipment. Some broadcast and sound engineering technicians produce movie soundtracks in motion picture production studios, control the sound of live events, such as concerts, or record music in a recording studio.

In the control room of a radio or television-broadcasting studio, these technicians operate equipment that regulates the signal strength, clarity, and range of sounds and colors of recordings or broadcasts. They also operate control panels to select the source of the material. Technicians may switch from one camera or studio to another, from film to live programming, or from network to local programming. By means of hand signals and, in television, telephone headsets, they give technical directions to other studio personnel.

*Audio and video equipment operators* operate specialized electronic equipment to record stage productions, live programs or events, and studio recordings. They edit and reproduce tapes for



*Broadcast and sound engineering technicians and radio operators work with television cameras, microphones, tape recorders, lighting, sound effects, transmitters, antennas, and other equipment.*

compact discs, records and cassettes, for radio and television broadcasting and for motion picture productions. The duties of audio and video equipment operators can be divided into two categories: technical and production activities used in the production of sound and picture images for film or videotape from set design to camera operation and post production activities where raw images are transformed to a final print or tape.

*Radio operators* mainly receive and transmit communications using a variety of tools. They are also responsible for repairing equipment using such devices as electronic testing equipment, hand tools, and power tools. These help to maintain communication systems in an operative condition.

Broadcast and sound engineering technicians and radio operators perform a variety of duties in small stations. In large stations and at the networks, technicians are more specialized, although job assignments may change from day to day. The terms “operator,” “engineer,” and “technician” often are used interchangeably to describe these jobs. *Transmitter operators* monitor and log outgoing signals and operate transmitters. *Maintenance technicians* set up, adjust, service, and repair electronic broadcasting equipment. *Audio control engineers* regulate volume and sound quality of television broadcasts, while *video control engineers* regulate their fidelity, brightness, and contrast. *Recording engineers* operate and maintain video and sound recording equipment. They may operate equipment designed to produce special effects, such as the illusions of a bolt of lightning or a police siren. *Sound mixers* or *re-recording mixers* produce the sound track of a movie, television, or radio program. After filming or recording, they may use a process called dubbing to insert sounds. *Field technicians* set up and operate broadcasting portable field transmission equipment outside the studio. Television news coverage requires so much electronic equipment, and the technology is changing so rapidly, that many stations assign technicians exclusively to news.

*Chief engineers, transmission engineers, and broadcast field supervisors* supervise the technicians who operate and maintain broadcasting equipment.

### Working Conditions

Broadcast, sound engineering, audio and video equipment technicians, and radio operators generally work indoors in pleasant surroundings. However, those who broadcast news and other programs from locations outside the studio may work outdoors in all types of